

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SES-02 SAA-01 MCT-02 HA-05

/087 W

-----094858 241312Z /45

R 241134Z AUG 78

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9997

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

USINT BAGHDAD

47 ?1\$/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 3297

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, IR

SUBJ: NATIONAL FRONT ANNOUNCES ITS REEMERGENCE: HITS GOI ON

ABADAN FIRE

SUMMARY: AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN TEHRAN, EVENING OF AUG. 23, SPOKESMAN DR. KARIM SANJABI ANNOUNCED THE RECREATION OF THE IRANIAN NATIONAL FRONT (INF) AS A FORMAL ORGANIZATION BUT NOT A POLITICAL PARTY. PREPARED STATEMENT BITTERLY ATTACKED GOI AND SHAH PERSONALLY AND CALLED POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION A SHAM. NATIONAL FRONT STATEMENT IDENTIFIED GROUP WITH THE OLD NATIONAL FRONT OF OIL NATIONALIZATION DAYS. INF SEEKS AN INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY BASED ON IRANIAN NATIONAL INTERESTS AND A SOUND FRAMEWORK OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. AT A PRESS CONFERENCE IN HIS HOME THE EVENING OF AUG. 23, DR. KARIM SANJABI, ACTING AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE NEWLY RECONSTITUTED  
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IRANIAN NATIONAL FRONT ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF THAT ORGANIZATION AS "A FORMAL ORGANIZATION" BUT NOT A POLITICAL PARTY. PRESENT AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE WERE A NUMBER OF FOREIGN REPORTERS INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF TIME, NEWSWEEK, WASHINGTON POST, MANCHESTER GUARDIAN, WIRE SERVICES AND FRENCH TELEVISION. ORGANIZERS OF THE MEETING SAID REPRESENTATIVES OF THE LOCAL PRESS HAD BEEN

INVITED BUT KAYHAN SAID ITS REPORTERS WERE FORBIDDEN TO ATTEND. TEHRAN JOURNAL REPORTER RAISED HIS HAND AND SAID NO ONE HAD FORBIDDEN HIM TO ATTEND. THERE WAS NO IRANIAN PRESS OR MEDIA COVERAGE OF THIS MEETING, BUT WE UNDERSTAND BBC AND CBS CARRIED SMALL ITEMS ON IT.

2. MEETING BEGAN WITH READING OF PREPARED STATEMENT BY DR. SANJABI. HE TOOK A VERY HARD LINE AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT AND THE SHAH, STATING "THE REIGN OF TERROR AND DECEPTION IN OUR COUNTRY STILL CONTINUES AND THAT SO FAR NO ACTION WHATSOEVER HAS BEEN TAKEN FOR THE RESTORATION OF THE NATION'S RIGHTS". SANJABI STATED THAT THE SHAH IN THE LAST 25 YEARS "HAS TURNED THE CONSTITUTIONAL SYSTEM INTO A DICTATORIAL, ABSOLUTIST REGIME." ELECTION TO PARLIAMENT HAS BECOME THE EQUIVALENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENT FROM THE SOLE GOVERNMENT PARTY. MOST LEGAL COMPETENCY IS NOW INVESTED IN SAVAK OR MILITARY COURTS. PRESS FREEDOM IS A PHENOMENON NOT TO BE SEEN.

3. SANJABI DESCRIBED POLITICAL LIBERATION AS A CABINET RESHUFFLE AND THE "INTRODUCTION OF CERTAIN MINOR AND SUPERFICIAL CHANGES" IN MILITARY PROCEDURES AND SOME NEW APPOINTMENTS IN SAVAK. THE NATIONAL FRONT PROCLAIMS "THERE IS NOT EVEN AN ATOM OF TRUTH IN ALL THESE PRETENSIONS AND THAT THERE HAVE BEEN NO STEPS AT ALL TOWARD THE RESTORATION OF A LIBERAL LEGAL SYSTEM". SANJABI CLAIMED THAT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IT IS IN THE PERIOD OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION THAT "PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS ARE SUPPRESSED BRUTALLY AND RELIGIOUS PEOPLE GUNNED DOWN MERCILESSLY WHILE THOUSANDS OF OTHERS ARE SENT TO PRISON."

4. SANJABI'S STATEMENT CRITICIZED THE SHAH FOR DESCRIBING THE INF AS MORE TRAITOROUS THAN THE TUDEH PARTY. HE SAID THE FRONT PROCLAIMS ONE MORE TO BE "THE PROTAGONISTS OF THE COUNTRY'S SOVEREIGNTY AND ITS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL INDEPENDENCE. WE PUBLICLY DELCARE TO BE AGAINST ANY COLONIAL INFLUENCE....."

5. SANJABI THEN ANNOUNCED THAT THE NATIONAL FRONT WOULD FOLLOW THREE BASIC PRINCIPLES: (A) IT WOULD SEEK THE INDEPENDENCE OF IRAN WHICH WOULD BE POSSIBLE ONLY WHEN "IRAN IS FREED FROM SLAVE-LIKE AFFILIATIONS I HEGENOMIC POWERS". (B) THE INF SEEKS THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN DIGNITIES AND RECOGNITION OF INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIAL LIBERTIES. IT BELIEVES THE SYSTEM OF DESPOTIC MONARCHY TO BE INCOMPATABLE WITH IRAN'S CONSTITUTIONAL POLITY. (C) THE INF SEEKS AN INDEPENDENT FOREIGN POLICY BASED ON IRAN'S NATIONAL INTEREST,

SOVEREIGNTY OF OTHER NATIONS AND STRUGGLE AGAINST ANY KIND OF  
COLONIALISM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

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6. ASKED QUESTION ON CAUSE OF ABADAN THEATRE FIRE, SANJABI  
CONDEMNED IT AS CRIMINAL, SAID NO MUSLIM OR IRANIAN COULD  
APPROVE OF WHAT HAPPENED. INF HAD NO CORRECT INFORMATION  
ON WHAT HAPPENED, ONLY WHAT IT HAD SEEN IN THE PRESS AND  
FROM THE GOVERNMENT. HE THEN WENT ON, "BUT AS I SAID, THERE  
IS NO DEFINITE PROOF OF WHO DID THIS, BUT IT REMINDS ME OF  
THE REICHSTAG FIRE." AUSTRIAN AND PERHAPS OTHER EUROPEAN  
MEDIA ARE DISPLAYING THIS TO MEAN SANJABI ACCUSED GOI OF  
SETTING FIRE. WHEN ASKED WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR RECENT  
VIOLENCE IN ISFAHAN AND SHIRAZ, SANJABI REPLIED THESE ARE  
ONLY ORDINARY PEOPLE WHO ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE GOVERNMENT,  
AND IT'S "ANSWER" TO THEIR PROTESTS IS MACHINE GUNS."

7. SANJABI WAS ASKED WHETHER  
INF WOULD COOPERATE WITH THE TUDEH PARTY. HE REPLIED THE  
INF WOULD COOPERATE WITH ANY PARTY REGARDLESS OF ITS  
IDEOLOGY. HE WAS ASKED WHETHER THE PRESS CONFERENCE ITSELF  
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WAS NOT EVIDENCE OF GREATER FREEDOM AND REPLIED IF THE MEETING OF A FEW MEANS FREEDOM, THEN IT IS, BUT THE POLICE CAN BE SEEN LIMITING AND HARASSING PEOPLE WHEN THEY TRY TO MEET IN THE MOSQUES. WHEN ASKED IF THE INF WOULD PARTICIPATE IN NEXT YEARS NATIONAL ELECTIONS, SANJABI ELLIPTICALLY REPLIED, "FOR FREE ELECTIONS, A FREE ENVIRONMENT AND FREE PRESS ARE NEEDED. IF THE NATION FEELS THE ENVIRONMENT IS FREE, IT WILL PARTICIPATE. HE STRESSED THAT THE NATIONAL FRONT IS NOT A POLITICAL PARTY BUT A FORMAL ORGANIZATION TO ENABLE THE MASSES TO ACHIEVE FREEDOM ACCORDING TO LAW.

8. COMMENT: DETAILS OF SANJABI STATEMENT AND NATIONAL FRONT PRINCIPLES BEING POUCHED NEA/IRN. MOST PUBLICLY IDENTIFIED SENIOR FRONT LEADERS WERE PRESENT WITH SANJABI. WE HOPE TO BE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THEM BY NAME LATER. PRESS CONFERENCE IS CLEARLY INF'S MAIDEN ADVENTURE INTO IRAN'S NEW POLITICAL ATMOSPHERE AND ITSELF, TO SOME DEGREE, CONTRADICTS VERY RIGID INF LINE CLAIMING LACK OF FREEDOM. WHAT IS SURPRISING IS THAT INF, HAVING TAKEN DECISION TO ENTER OPEN ARENA, DID NOT ALSO USE MORE CONCILIATORY REETORIC. ASIDE FROM FACT THAT MANY FRONT LEADERS ARE IDEOLOGICALLY COMMITTED TO A HARD LINE, WE BELIEVE THIS IS ALSO NECESSARY PART OF COMPROMISE TO HOLD BOTH MILITANTS AND MODERATES TOGETHER IN UNITY. INF'S EXTREME VIEW OF POLITICAL "REALITY" IS NOT RPT NOT SHARED BY OBJECTIVE OBSERVERS, EITHER IRANIAN OR FOREIGN, WHO ARE NOT ALREADY COMMITTED TO INF VIEWS.  
SULLIVAN

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## Message Attributes

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**Errors:** N/A  
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**TAGS:** PINS, IR, IRANIAN NATIONAL FRONT  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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